The Voice of the SHEPHERD THROUGH THE CLOUDS TO HIS LAMBS ON EARTH,

Shewing them a way of escape from the DRAGON's Subtilties.

Wherein is shewed the Worship of *Mysterie Babylon*, in four several Notes, as it differs from the Worship of Christ, together with the Saints duty as to a separating from her.

Likewise the danger laid down, which must be expected to fall upon those that stay in *Mysterie Babylon* after notice given them to the contrary of it.

Also, some signs given of the shortnesse of her Reign over the Earth.

He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches, Rev.2.29. *Blessed is he that keepeth his garment, for he shall walk with me in white, for he is worthy*, Rev.3.4.

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An Epiſtle to the Reader.

FRiend, who ever thou art unto whom theſe lines may come, know this, That it was the ſtrong importunity, and earneſt deſire of ſome Chriſtians, which was the cauſe why theſe lines came to publick view, judging that they might be of uſe to the Lord's people. In this day of darkneſſe the Lords people do want light into their preſent work; and indeed the ground of the miſcarriage of many ſouls, it's judged is not ſo much from wilfulneß, as from ignorance, Prov. 29.18. Where there is no viſion, the people periſh. And yet let me tell you, That as to the Miniſters of Chriſt, the great unhappineß of the Saints at this day is, that there is not ſo great a want of light, as faithfulneß in the Miniſters about diſpenſing of it; ſo that the want of Viſion ariſeth through want of heart in the peoples Teachers, who will not plainly ſhew them their duty, but hold them in an ignorant ſuſpence through a ſlaviſh fear which is upon them. This was the ſin of the Jews Teachers of old, Jer. 15.19. Therefore thus ſaith the Lord, if thou return, then wil I bring thee again, and thou ſhalt ſtand before me; and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou ſhalt be as my mouth; let them return ro thee, but return thou not unto them. They do not love to make any difference between Saint and ſinners, between him that ſerveth God, and him that ſerveth him not, and that for fear of diſpleaſing of the great ones of the times they live in, by which means the poor people did they knew not what, blindly running on in ways not pleaſing to God, and ſo became the ſubjects of wrath, when ſome of the people hardly knew that they had ſinned, Iſa. 9.16. For the Leaders of this people cauſe them to err, and they that are led of them, are deſtroyed,

Therefore you the Lords people in this Nation, or any part of the World, to you I ſpeak, and to you is this little Treatiſe ſent, and for your ſakes it was written, to adviſe, warn and caution you to look to your ſouls, and not to truſt men, but try them more; for we are fallen into ſuch an age of the world, that affords Micha's *complaint, Mic.7.4.* **The beſt of them are as a bryar, and the moſt upright is ſharper then a thorn-hedge.**

Certainly the ruine of Antichriſt cannot be far off; this is therefore ſent to you to bid you ſtand off from her, partake not with her; for if God find you doing of her work, he will not make any difference between you and the worſt of them, as to outward Judgements, Jer.9.25 26. **Behold the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I wil puniſh all them that are circumciſed, with the uncircumciſed, &c.** *Therefore if this to that end prove uſeful to thee, give God the glory, and me thy prayers, who am, and hope ever to remain, thine and the Churches ſervant.*

THE

The Voice of the

Great Shepherd from Heaven

TO HIS

LAMBS on Earth, &c.

REV. 18. 4.

And I heard another Voice from Heaven, ſaying, Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her ſins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

THis Book was written by *John* the Divine in the time of his baniſhment into the Iſle of *Patmos* by *Domition* then Emperor of *Rome*, chap. 1. ver. 9. The ſcope of which Viſion is, To ſhew what the Work of God would be from that time forward in the ſeveral ages of the World; for he that ſhall apply any part of this Book to any time, or age, or perſon, or thing done in the World, be-

fore the writing or penning of the Vision, I conceive takes a wrong way to work, Chap. 4. v. 1. *After this I looked, and behold a door was opened in Heaven, and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a Trumpet talking with me, which said, Come up hither, and I will shew the things which must be hereafter.* Now the main things in discourse is about the state of *Rome* as then it was, or should be; together with what should happen to the Kingdom and Church of Christ in the perioding of that Monarchy.

Now all these things are placed under three seasons of the World:

First, What respecteth *Rome* as *Pagan.*

Secondly, What respecteth *Rome* as *Christian.*

Thirdly, What respecteth *Rome* as *Antichristian.*

First, What respecteth *Rome* as *Pagan,* you must place under the seals, Chap. 6. v. 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 12. *And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard as it were the voice of Thunder, one of the four Beasts, saying, Come and see; and I saw, and behold, a white Horse, and he that sate on him had a Bow, and a Crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering, and to conquer; and when he had opened the seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see; and I beheld, and lo, a black Horse, and he that sate on him had a pair of ballances in his hand, &c.* with chap. 8. v. 1. Secondly, That which respecteth *Rome* as *Christian* you must place under the seven Trumpets, chap. 8. v. 6, 7, 8, 10, 12. with chap. 9. v. 1, 14. *And I saw the seven Angels which stood before God, and to them were given seven Trumpets, & the seven Angels which had the seven Trumpets, prepared themselves to sound, &c.* Thirdly, What of this Book relates to *Rome* as *Antichristian,* you must place under the seven Vials, ch. 16. v. 2, 3, 4 8, 10, 12, 17. *And the first went and poured his Vial upon the Earth, &c.* In all which you must observe these three Rules; first, That the six Trumpets come in the rear of the Seals; the first Trumpet taking its rise from the last Seal; & so the seven Vials come in the rear of the seven Trumpets, the first Vial taking place of the last Trumpet, or begins where the last Trumpet ended. A second Rule is this, *viz.* That the seven Trumpets were the Founders or bringers in of *Rome's* apostasie or declension gradually, by degrees, as

you

you may see if you consider them in their several effects, ch. 8. v. 7, 8, 9, 10, 13. ch. 9. v. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19. Now in ch. 9. v. 1, 2. there you have the fifth Trumpet with its effects; the Trumpet sounds in the first, and the effect you have in the second verse, which effect fully ripened the Apostasie; and at the sounding of this Trumpet *Rome* became wholly void of having any thing of God in her, and unto this state she was coming under all the former Trumpets: So in the third verse up comes the Abbots, Monks, Priests and Fryars, with swarms of the Jesuits, together with their bloody persecuting spirit. In the *11th* verse you may see the rise of the Pope. In the *14th* verse you may see God letting loose the four *Turkish* Families upon them, as a Judgement for their pride and apostasie, which have swallowed up so many of their Churches in *Greece*. In the *20th* verse you may see what little effect that Judgement took upon those proud Apostates.

Now the last Rule that I shall give you, is this, That the work of the seven Vials is to bring off that apostasie from *Rome* again, which was brought on by the seven Trumpets; for you may observe, that on the same matter (gradually) from first to last, that the effects of the seven Trumpets fell upon, bringing in *Rome's* apostasie upon the same subject matter (step by step) falls the Vials to bring it off again.

Thus having given an account of the order of this blessed Prophesie, I now come to speak of the subject matter of the effects of, or under the seven Trumpets, and that is *Rome's* apostasie, upon which she is tearmed or called a *Whore*, which for our better information the Holy Ghost by *John* describes her to the World by three characters:

First, From her place or scituation.

Secondly, Her practise.

Thirdly, From, or by her Name.

First, The place pointed at, you have in ch. 17. v. 9, 18. *And here is the mind which hath wisdom; the seven Heads are seven Mountains on which the woman sitteth, and the woman which thou sawest, is that great City which reigneth over the Kings of the Earth.* The se-

ven Mountains can intend no other but *Rome*, which then ſtood on ſeven Hills: Beſides, it's ſaid to be that City on ſeven Mountains, which reigns over the Kings of the Earth. Now what City can that be but *Rome*.

Secondly, She is ſet out to you by her practiſe, to be a bloody perſecuting Whore, who violently forceth men to worſhip her, or elſe ruines Life and Eſtate, *Rev.* 17. 6. with chap. 16. ver. 6. *&c. And I ſaw the woman drunken with the blood of the Saints, and with the blood of the Martyrs of Jeſus; and when I ſaw her, I wondered with great admiration, &c.*

Thirdly, She is ſet out by her Name, ch. 7. v. 5. *Myſtery Babylon the Mother of harlots, and abomination of the Earth.* And this is written on her fore-head; giving men to underſtand, that although Malefactor-like ſhe will endeavour to raze or pick out the Letters of her Name again, that ſo ſhe may not be miſtruſted for ſuch an one as ſhe is; yet there will ſome one ſyllable in her fore-head ſtil abide, by which ſhe may be known, and that is *abomination*, ſomething allowedly practiſed by her, which is lothſome even to Nature it ſelf, as her Luxury, Pride, Tyranny, Blood-thirſtineſſe and Covetouſneſſe, *&c.* For you muſt not think that ſhe wil own her ſelf to be a Whore, or her worſhip to be ſinful; neither think you that her Agents will ſay, That they are the Agents of ſin, or ſuch a Whore; but that they are all of God; and their Work is to make it appear that the Whore is a true Spouſe, and her Worſhip is God's Worſhip, and that themſelves are Apoſtolical, and that the contrary to them are Hereticks, and muſt be out of favour unleſſe they wil comply: This you may ſee ſpoken of this Myſterie *Babylon* before her riſe, 2 Theſſ. 2. 3, 4. *We beſeech you brethren, &c. that ye be not ſoon ſhaken in mind, or be troubled neither by ſpirit, nor by word, nor by letter, as that the day of Chriſt is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day ſhall not come except there come a falling away firſt, and that man of ſin be revealed, the ſon of perdition, who oppoſeth and exalteth himſelf above all that is called God, or that is worſhipped, ſo that he as God ſitteth in the Temple of God, ſhewing himſelf that he is God.* Thus the holy Ghoſt having ſo plainly deſcribed this *Myſtery Babylon*, ſo clear, that even the weakeſt capacity may find her out, either by Place, Practice or Name; he

he comes in the Text to give this general Call to all the Lord's people to make haſt to get out from her, ſaying, *Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her ſins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*

But before I come to divide the words, give me leave to anſwer a queſtion.

Queſt. *But what is it of* Babylon *we are ſo ſtrictly required to come out from? Is it* Babylon *as to its place or habitation, or is it* Babylon *as to its Worſhip?*

Anſ. It were to be wiſhed we could come out of *Babylon* as to its habitation; for the people of God have found it a great loſs to them to live near idolaters, as the *Iſraelites* in living near the *Midianites*, and *Jacob* in living near the *Sichamites* and *Lot* in living ſo near the *Sodomites*; and *Jehoſaphat* in living ſo near wicked *Ahab*.

But the main thing intended by the Holy Ghoſt, is the Worſhip of *Babylon*, becauſe in the verſe before the Text it is called *the Wine of the wrath of her Fornication*: It may be compared to Wine for the pleaſantneſs of it; it may be compared to Fornication, becauſe although it was once the Worſhip of God, yet now it is ſo poyſoned and adulterated by the Whoriſh inventions of men, that it is abhorr'd by God as a man would abhor the act of adultery in his own Wife; and it may be called Wrath becauſe of the ſad effects which will follow it; for God wil plague idolaters with his wrath, Rev. 14. 10, 11. *The ſame ſhall drink of the Wine of the wrath of God which is poured out without mixture into the Cup of his indignation; and he ſhall be tormented with fire and brimſtone in the preſence of the holy Angels, and in the preſence of the Lamb, and the ſmoak of their torment aſcendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no reſt day nor night who worſhip the Beaſt and his Image, and whoſoever receiveth the mark of his Name.*

Secondly, It muſt needs be meant the Worſhip of the Whore which we are called to withdraw from, becauſe the Merchants of the Earth are ſaid to be waxen rich by the abundance of her delicates. Now who are thoſe Merchants if not the Jeſuits, Prieſts and Fryars, who make it their trade to ſail from ſea to ſea, and from one end of the earth to the other, to ſell their pardons and indulgences, their croſſes, crucifixes, praying,

ing orders for the dead, to get them out of Purgatory, &c. and by this means they bring in a wonderful Revenue to the Popish party for the use of their Abbies, Monasteries, Colledges, &c. So that by all which it appears it is the Worship of Rome we must withdraw from.

In the words of the Text you have these two things.

First, A Duty.

Secondly, A Motive.

The duty in these words, *Come out of her my people.* The motive on which the duty is grounded, is two-fold: First, to stay in *Babylon* is to be a partaker with her in her sins. Secondly, So to do is to be numbred up with her in her plagues.

Doct. 1. *It is the duty of the Lords people speedily to come out of, and to withdraw from every known part of an unlawful Worship.*

Doct. 2 *That for God's people to stay in, or touch with any known part of an unlawful Worship, is a very dangerous thing if notice be given them of it.*

Doct. 1. *It is the duty of the Lords people speedily to come out of, and to withdraw from every known part of an unlawful Worship.*

For proof thereof the Text it self is sufficient; but likewise see Isa. 52.11. *Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence; touch no unclean thing; go get out of the midst of her, be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord.* So Jer. 51.44,45. *And I will punish Bell in Babylon; & I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up, and the Nations shall not flow together any more unto him; yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall. My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord.* In both of those places God gives a Call to his people to come out of *Babylon*; this is meant of old literal *Babylon* into which the *Jews* were carryed captive. Now in commanding them to come out of it, God either meant the place, or the Worship of the place. Not the place; for when the false Prophets a little after their coming into it, had buzzed them in the ears of a sudden Redemption, upon which they began to think how they might flie away; the Lord sends by *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel* to tell them, he intended no such thing as their removal from the place, and therefore they should have a special care not to stir unless they saw God going before them. Therefore it was

Babylons

Babylons Worſhip God calls upon them to come out from; it was not from the yoke of ſufferings, but the yoke of Ceremonies they were to withdraw from, 1 Cor. 10. 20, 21. *But I ſay, That the things which the Gentiles ſacrifice, they ſacrifice to Devils, and not to God; ye cannot drink the Cup of the Lord, and the Cup of Devils, ye cannot be partakers of the Lords Table, and the Table of Devils*; with 2 Cor. 6, 16, 17, 18 *And what concord hath Chriſt with Belial, &c. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye ſeparated, ſaith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and you ſhall be my ſons and daughters, ſaith the Lord God Almighty.*

Queſt. But how ſhall we know the Worſhip of this Whore, or Myſtery *Babylon* the Mother of Harlots?

Anſ. By theſe four notes of obſervation:

Firſt, That which hath for its bottom or foundation only the inventions of humane traditions and inſtitutions of men, that Worſhip is not of God, but of Myſterie Babylon; for as there are two Worſhips on foot in the World, and the Authors of them God and the Devil; ſo have they their ſeveral Books, which are proper to their ſeveral Worſhips, by which they prove their Worſhips all along in the World.

Firſt, God hath his Book, which is the Word of Scripture, Iſa. 8, 20. *To the Law, and to the Teſtimony, if they ſpeak not according to this Word, it is becauſe there is no light in them.* John 5. 39. *Search the Scriptures, &c.* So Act. 28. 23. *And when they had appointed them a day, there came many to him into his Lodging, to whom he expounded and teſtified the Kingdom of God, perſwading them concerning Jeſus both out of the Law of Moſes, and out of the Prophets, from morning till evening.* 2 Theſſ. 2. 15. *Therefore brethren, ſtand faſt, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our Epiſtle.* Therefore is the Scripture called the Miniſtry of the Word; *For we will give our ſelves continually to prayer, and to the Word.* And the faithful Word, and Word of Conviction to gain-ſayers, Tit. 1. 9. *Holding faſt the faithful Word, &c.* Likewiſe a Judgement is threatned of God on thoſe that ſhall ſlight it as a Rule of Faith and Doctrine, *Prov.* 13. 13. *Whoſo deſpiſed the Word, ſhall be deſtroyed; but he that feareth the Commandment, ſhall be rewarded.* A judgement likewiſe on thoſe that ſhal

teach

teach by any other Rule, Isa.29.13, 14. *Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men; therefore behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, &c.* So Rev.22,19. *And if any man shall take away from the words of this Book of this prophesie, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life, and out of the holy City, and from the things which are written in this Book.*

Now as God hath his Book to prove his Worship by, so the Devil hath his Book to prove his Worship by; and these are contrary the one to the other; the Devil's Book is the Decrees of Humane Councils, Customs, Institutions and Traditions of men: Now where this is pleaded only as a ground of Worship, I reject it, for it's the Devils Scripture.

Now I shall shew you how these two Books have been pleaded one against the other, as a ground for Worship, Matth. 15, 1,2. with the 9th ver. *Then came the Scribes and Pharisees which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy Disciples transgress the tradition of the Elders, for they wash not their hands when they eat bread?* The Devil had brought into the Jewish Church a petty practise, and had imposed it upon the Jews for a Religious Rite & Service, which was, Not to eat meat with unwashen hands; that which they had to urge for it as a ground to the practise, was the tradition of the Elders; but did our Saviour approve of this Scripture? see the 9th ver. *But in vain do they worship me, teaching for Doctrine the Commandments of men.* Again in *Jeremiah*'s days the people were brought by the Devil to submit to his Worship, to burn incense, and to offer Cakes to the Queen of Heaven, Jer.14 3,4,5. *Because of their wickedness which they have committed to provoke me to anger, in that they went to burn incense, and to serve other Gods whom they knew not, &c.* But see their Scriptural ground for it, Verse 16,17. *As for the Word which thou hast spoken unto us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee, but we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the Queen of Heaven, and to pour out Drink-offerings unto her, (as we have done, we and our Fathers, our Kings and our Princes, in the Cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem) for then had we plenty of Victual,*

and

and were well, and saw no evil. Observe, not the Word of God, but the Scriptures of Hell, which are always urged as a bottom for Idolatry. *It* was a custom, even the custom of their Fathers and their Princes to do so always in their Cities of *Judah*; so that here is both custom and antiquity shewed for their practice; but did God approve of this kind of Scripture? ch. 10.2. *Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the Heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of Heaven, for the Heathen are dismayed at them; for the customs of the people are vain, &c.* Again, is there any thing more clear then this, That where the traditions and vain institutions of the Devil prevails as a ground to Worship, that there that prevailing party always are working and projecting how they may obscure and darken the Scriptures. And is not their daily discourse, That it was never well since the Book of Scriptures have been left for every one to read it? And is it not commonly spoken among such, That it will never be wel until we have either pluckt their Bibles out of the hands of the people, or turned them into *Latin*, that so they may be kept from the sight of that Light which will discover their darkness. I leave this to your consciences. Now if this be so, and you are convinced of it, then I say, it is of *Mysterie Babylon*, and by the Word of God you are to withdraw from it; and to be so far from joining with it, that you are to avoid the appearance of it as a deadly evil.

Second Note of the Worship of *Mystrie Babylon*, That that worship what ever it be, or where ever it be, that is grounded on such Customs and Traditions as makes void the known commandements of God, that is not of God, but of *Mysterie Babylon.*

Upon this account it was that our *Saviour* rejected that which the Scribes and *Pharisees* brought in for a piece of Religious observation, Matth. 15.1,2. *Why do thy Disciples transgress the tradition of the Elders, for they wash not when they eat Bread?* Now the question will be, Upon what score our Saviour defends his Disciples eating of meat with unwashen hands? Not that it was an evil in it self to eat with unwashed hands, neither was it the bare practice that our Saviour either slighted or opposed; but it was, that they had made it a piece of Religion, and

 imposed

impoſed it by the force of thoſe traditions of the Fathers, which had ſhut out the known commandments of God: They were zealous for old obſervations, Church-Councils & Cuſtoms of the Fathers, ſo theſe were obſerved, all was wel, it mattered not what became of the commandments of God, men may live as they liſt with reſpect to Gods commands. They could teach, that crying, reigning ſins were but petty things, as diſhonoring of Parents, as well thoſe in heaven, as thoſe on earth, this was no great matter. Beſides, do you not think that one of thoſe Commandments which our Saviour; chargeth home the breach of ſo upon thoſe reverent Fathers in God, *viz.* the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, might not be ſomething anſwerable to the writing of a Book called, *The book of Liberty*, or *Book of ſports*, granting to all ſorts of peop'e a tolleration upon the Sabbath day to do any thing upon that day except what God required ſhould be done upon it; namely, That they might be any where, at any ſport, exerciſe or meeting, except it were at a Meeting on the Lord's day for preaching the Word and Prayer. See Mat. 15. 4,5,6. *For God commanded ſaying, Honor thy Father and thy Mother, and he that curſeth Father or Mother, let him dye the death. But ye ſay, Whoſoever ſhall ſay to his Father or Mother, it is a gift, by whatſoever thou mighteſt be profited by me, and honor not his Father or his Mother, he ſhall be free. Thus have you made the Commandements of God of none effect by your tradition.* In like manner the Popiſh Church ſtands more upon obſervation of her *Ceremonies*, then of the *Commands* of *Chriſt*; her Miniſters may forbear to preach, and yet be excuſed; but if they forbear conformity to any of her *ceremonies*, then their *mouths* muſt be ſtopt, and their *Families* ruined; ſo for the people, they ſhall be rendered more obnoxious by omitting a Croſs or ſome ſmall ceremony, then for whoring, drinking, ſwearing, *&c.*

Now if ſo, then this is that which is of *Myſterie Babylon*, and that which *Chriſtians* are commanded to withdraw from, and to come out of. Wherever we may be caſt in the World, we are to conſider our duty is, *to ſeparate our ſelves from falſe Worſhip as an evil thing, upon pain of Gods diſpleaſure.*

Third Note; That which is cryed up by the ignorant and prophane ones of the times, is not of God, but of *Myſterie Babylon*

bylon, or the Antichrist; Frst, because the Scripture condemns that which such cry up as vain, Jer. 10. 3. *for the customs of the people are vain*, &c. Secondly, God's people are in the Word strictly cautioned how they follow such, taking it for granted, that their ordinary way is an evil sinful way, Exod. 23. 2. *Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil*, &c. It is said into what way they are *accustomed* unto, Jer 13. 23. *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leepard his spots? then may ye also do good that are* [*accustomed*] *to do evil.*

Secondly They cannot cry up any thing for Gods glory, because they want spiritual sight to discern it withal, 1 Cor. 2. 4 *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* Now how can men cry up, or make choice of that which they never saw?

Thirdly, If they could see into the ways of Christ, or could discerne any thing of the spiritual Worship, yet they neither would or could make choice of it, or cry it up, as that whereunto they would submit or subject themselves; so Rom. 8 7. *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject unto the Law of God, neither indeed can be.*

Fourthly, The Word of God tells us, That the generality of the ignorant shall contend for, and cry up the Worship of the Whore, or *Mysterie Babylon*, Rev. 17. 15. *The waters which thou sawest where the Whore sitteth, are Peoples, and Multitudes, and Nations, and Tongues*, which denotes their free choice, and voluntary accepting of her government, like unto a Nations chusing of Parliament-men, the person whom the people chooseth to make their Laws for them, and unto whom they willingly subject, they use to carry up and down upon their necke.

Fourth Note, That Worship which propagates it self by outward force and violence, is not of God, but of *Mysterie Babylon*; therefore that which God's people are strictly required to withdraw from and to come out of.

First, Because that way of promoting a Religion or Worship is attributed to the Whore as her way only, Rev. 13. 15, 16, 17. *And he had power to give life unto the Image of the Beast, that the I-*

mage of the Beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the Image of the Beast, should be killed. And he caused all both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their fore heads: and no man might buy or sell save he that had the mark or the name of the Beast, or the number of his name, ch. 17. 6. *And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the Saints, and with the blood of the Martyrs of Jesus; and when I saw her, I wondred with great admiration.* So chap. 18. 24. *and in her was found the blood of Prophets and of Saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.*

Secondly, Because it's a way God hath disowned in the building of his house in the Old-Testament-time; and surely he hath no more respect for it under the New-Testament then he had under the Old; Zach. 4. 6. *Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, not by Might, nor by Power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

Thirdly, When this Prelatical persecuting spirit began to bud and spring forth among the Disciples of our Lord Jesus, he gives a very great check to it, and puts a rebuke upon it as soon as it shews it self, *Luke* 9. 51, 52, 53, 54, 55. *And it came to pass that when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, & sent Messengers before his face, and they went & entered into a Village of the Samaritans to make ready for him, and they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from Heaven and consume them, as Elias did? but he turned and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of, for the Son of man is not come to destroy mens lives, but to save them.*

Fourthly, Our Saviour and his *Apostles* betook themselves to another way in the promoting of their Gospell-worship, as a way more agreable to his glory; and that was, to make his way in upon the hearts and minds of men, not by driving, but by drawing of them, and this shews Christ and his Ministry to be supernatural, and above the reach of Carnal men, Psal. 110. 3 *Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of thy power.* Now what need had *Christs Ministers* to force a people made willing before?

Now

Now that way that darkens the glory of Christ or God, is none of his way; but for *Christs Ministers* to force or violently to compel by the outward Sword of the Magistrate, persons to submit to *Christs Worship*, is that which derogates from his glory as a God, it renders him insufficient, and not like that which he hath said of himself, Matth. 28.18 *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All Power is given unto me in heaven and in earth, &c.* Again, it cannot be the way of God or of Christ, to force any to his Worship by any outward violence, because if any do come to his Worship, yet if they come against their Wills, that which they do is abominable in the sight of God, because the will is the main thing God and his Son Jesus Christ looks for, *Exod.25. 2. Speak unto the Children of Israel that they bring me an offering, of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart, ye shall take my offering.* So Exod.35.5. *Take ye from amongst you an offering unto the Lord, whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the Lord, &c.* therefore the way which Christ & his Apostles did use, was a still, quiet way, making no such rating noise in the World in a way of affrighting and terrifying men & women with outward cruelty, as the Whore, or Mysterie Babylon doth, Isa. 42. 1, 2. *Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him, he shall bring forth judgement to the Gentiles; he shall not cry nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street* 1. King. 19. 11, 12. *And he said, go forth and stand upon the Mount before the Lord, and behold, the Lord passed by, and a great & strong wind rent the Mountains, & brake in pieces the Rock before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; & after the wind an Earthquake, but the Lord was not in the Earthquake; and after the Earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a small still voice, &c.* So Isa.30. 21. *And thine ear shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left.* So the Ministers of Christ they come not in a Lording, commanding way, 1 Pet. 5 3 *Neither as being Lords over God's Heritage, but being examples to the Flock*; but in a sweet, humble, loving, beseeching, entreating way, 2 Cor, 5.20. *Now then we are Embassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christs stead be ye reconciled to God.*

Dost.

Doct. 2 *That for Gods people to ſtay in, or touch with any thing of a known unlawful Worſhip, it is a very dangerous thing.*

Reaſ. 1. Becauſe it corrupts them, Deut. 9 12, *And the Lord ſaid unto me, Ariſe, get thee down quickly from hence, for thy people which thou haſt brought forth out of Egypt, have corrupted themſelves, they are quickly turned aſide out of the way which I commanded them. They have made him a Molten image,* Hoſ. 9.9 *They have deeply corrupted themſelves as in the days of Gibeah; therefore he will remember their iniquity, and viſit their ſins,* What ever men have been or done for God, yet this renders them at laſt abominable to God, and makes all their former ſervice forgotten, Ezek. 18. 24. *But when the righteous turneth away from his righteouſneſs, and committeth iniquity, and doth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doth, ſhall he live? All his righteouſneſs that he hath done, ſhall not be mentioned, in his treſpaſs that he had treſpaſſed, and in the ſin that he hath ſinned, in them ſhall he dye.*

Reaſ. 2. It's dangerous, becauſe it breaks Communion between God and his people, as between a man and his Wife, 1 Cor. 10.21. with 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15, 16. *For what fellowſhip hath righteouſneſs with unrighteouſneſs,* &c. Cannot men bear this in their Wives, *viz.* that they ſhould freely give up themſelves to the uſe of others, though it ſhould be but one day in ſeven; and will this make a man a ſtranger to his own wife? And ſhall we think that God can bear it in his people? No; no.

Reaſ. 3. It's a dangerous thing, becauſe the more we touch with Idolatry, the more will our hearts be prepared for it; nay God in Judgement to a people gives up men with the more eagerneſs to idolatry; ſo that the more we meddle with it, the more we ſhall, *Hoſ.* 4, 13.14 *They ſacrifice on the tops of Mountains, and burn incenſe upon the Hills under Oaks, and Poplers, and Elms, becauſe the ſhadow thereof is good; therefore your Daughters ſhall commit whoredom, and your Spouſes ſhall commit adultery, &c. Becauſe Ephraim hath made many Altars to ſin, Altars ſhall be unto him to ſin,* Hoſ. 8.11. Rom. 1, 28. *And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do thoſe things which are not convenient.*

Reaſ. 4. It's dangerous, becauſe it renders men uſeleſs for God, when God comes forth with any eminent Work in the World

World to employ men in, whether men are in an *Eccleſiaſticall* or Civil capacity; God wil work by ſtones before he wil make uſe of ſuch men as have, or ſhall turn aſide in the Apoſtaſie of the ages they live in, without ſome repentance.

Firſt, It renders Miniſters uſeleſſe, what ever they have been, or have done for God, Ezek. 44. 10, 11, 12, 13 14 15, 16. *And the Levites that are gone away far from me, when Iſrael went aſtray, which went away from me after their idols, they ſhall even bear their iniquity, yet they ſhall be Miniſters in my Sanctuary, having charge at the gates of the Houſe, and Miniſtring to the Houſe, they ſhall ſlay the Burnt-Offerings and the Sacrifice for the people, and they ſhall ſtand before them to miniſter unto them, becauſe they miniſtred unto them before their idols, and cauſed the Houſe of Iſrael to fall into iniquity; therefore have I lift up my hand againſt them, ſaith the Lord God, & they ſhall bear their iniquity, & they ſhall not come near unto me, to do the Office of a Prieſt unto me, nor to come near to any of my holy things in the moſt holy place, but they ſhall bear their ſhame and their abomination which they have committed; and I wil make them keepers of the charge of the houſe, for all the ſervice thereof, and for all that ſhall be done therein; and the Prieſts, the Levites, the ſons of Zadock that kept the charge of my Sanctuary, when the Children of Iſrael went aſtray from me; they ſhall come near to me, to miniſter unto me, and they ſhall ſtand before me, to offer unto me the fat, and the blood, ſaith the Lord God; they ſhall enter into my Sanctuary, and they ſhall come neat to my Table to miniſter unto me, and they ſhall keep my charge.*

2. No, nor with other men wil God work his beſt Works in the World, that ſhall turn aſide to the Apoſtaſie, without repentance, Jer. 51. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. *Thou art my Battel-Ax and Weapons of War; for with thee will I break in pieces the Nations: and with thee will I deſtroy Kingdoms, &c.* Here you may ſee what great Work God hath to do for his faithful ones in the World, both Miniſters and others: But who are they of his people which God will employ in this Work, any that have complied or ſtruck in with *Myſterie Babylon*? See ver. the 26 of the ſame ch. *And they ſhall not take of thee a ſtone for a corner, nor a ſtone for Foundations; but thou ſhalt be deſolate for ever.*

Reaſ. 5.

Reaſ. 5. *It* is dangerous, becauſe it gives God an occaſion to reject and caſt away a people, *Hoſ.* 9.17. *My God will caſt them away, becauſe they did not hearken unto him, and they ſhall be wanderers among the Nations.* As a man would in the like caſe write a Bill of Divorce againſt his Wife, and turn her away.

Reaſ. 6. It's dangerous, becauſe what ever they promiſe themſelves by their conforming, yet they ſhal know it fits them to be bread for the jaws, and them and theirs to be fleſh for the claws of their enemies, Hoſ. 8. 3. *Iſrael hath caſt off the thing that is good, the Enemy ſhall purſue him.*

Reaſ. 7. And laſtly, *It's* dangerous ſo to do, becauſe (without a great deal, of repentance) it is a practice which God will reward with everlaſting deſtruction, *Rev.* 14 10, 11. *The ſame ſhall drink of the Wine of the wrath of God which is poured out without mixture,* &c. which wrath is for ever and ever.

Obj. But may we not ſubmit unto that in the Worſhip of God that is not forbid, although not commanded?

Anſ. No; at your perill be it; for that which ought to be a Chriſtians Rule in the Worſhip and Service of God, it is not Negatives, but Poſitives: It's not enough to ſay, This or that Ceremony uſed in the Church is not forbidden, but is it by any Word of God required? *Iſa.*8 20. *To the Law, and to the Teſtimony,* &c. For the queſtion at the laſt day will not be, Whether this or that ceremony uſed in the Church was not forbidden? but, Where it was required? Iſa. 1. 12. *Ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hands, to tread in my Courts?*

But to illuſtrate this by ſome particulars.

Firſt, This practice of admitting of things into the Worſhip of Chriſt meerly upon their not being forbidden, is againſt clear precept.

Secondly, The evil of this was pleaded by providence.

Thirdly, It's againſt all reaſon.

Firſt, It's againſt clear precept, *Deut.* 12. ver. laſt; *What thing ſoever I command you, obſerve to do it; thou ſhalt not add thereto, nor diminiſh from it.*

Secondly, The evil of this was pleaded by providence, *Lev.* 10.1,2. *And Nadab and Abihu the ſons of Aaron, took either of them his Cenſer, and put fire therein, and put incenſe thereon, and offered ſtrange*

ſtrange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not; *and there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they dyed before the Lord.* Pray where was the uſe of that kind of fire which *Nahab* and *Abihu* offered at that time, forbidden? But was it therefore lawful to be offered in God's Worſhip. We muſt know, that *God's* not commanding the thing, or no example leading us to the uſe of the thing, is a ſufficient prohibition to the uſe of that thing? Where is that practice of the men of *Bethſhemeſh* looking into the Ark, expreſly forbidden, 1 *Sam.* 6.19.20. *And he ſmote the men of Bethſhemeſh, becauſe they had looked into the Ark of the Lord, even he ſmote of the people fifty thouſand threeſcore and ten men; and the people lamented becauſe the Lord had ſmote many of the people with a great ſlaughter; and the men of Bethſhemeſh ſaid, Who is able to ſtand before this holy Lord God? and to whom ſhall he go up from us?* So where was *Uzzah's* practice of putting forth his hand by way of ſuccor to the Ark? (in 2 *Sam.*6.5.) forbidden? but was this allowed of as currantable? ſee Rev.7. *And the anger of the Lord was kindled againſt Uzzah, and God ſmote him there for his error, and there he dyed by the Ark of God.*

Thirdly, It's againſt all reaſon; for if this argument ſhou'd take place which ſaith we may admit of any thing in the worſhip of God upon this account, what then might not be brought in? And how much of Popery will take place, and will come into the Worſhip of God do what you can, if this be admitted? For beſides their many Monkiſh Orders and Monaſteries, let me know where that croſſing of themſelves ſo many times is forbidden? Beſides, where is the ſaying prayers with dropping of Beads at the end of their prayers, forbid? And as for the uſe of images as helps to devotion, and the bowing to the Altar as a place more holy then other places, by reaſon of God's more eſpecial preſence, and a thouſand things more of ſuch import, when enjoyned upon weak *Chriſtians*, (they believing and receiving the forementioned aſſertion, That all things impoſed by *Rulers* Civil or Eccleſiaſtical, that are not forbidden by God, are lawful, and to be obeyed) theſe weak *Chriſtians* not being able readily to bring an expreſs Scripture to oppoſe the commands of men in this or that particular, and that through their ignorance in the ſecond command-

ment, which treats of instituted worship, and plainly declares, That what ever is made necessary in the Worship of God, that is not of Divine Warrant, is such an image as ought not to be made, and if made, not to be bowed unto. I say, such weak *Christians* will soon stoop and bow unto the yoke of such idolatrous and Antichristian impositors; and so by granting this Assertion, you do but deliver up the souls of weak Christians into the hands of Soul-Murtherers; whereas by pleading for the contrary truth, you put this *Weapon* into the hands of weak Christians, *viz.* Where is the Scripture for this or that in the Worship of *God*? you command it, but where doth God command it? And by this Weapon they shall be able to withstand (in the strength of their God) the impositions of the Whore, and of all such as are of a Whorish, Antichristian and Beastly spirit: And thus you see the unreasonableness and uncharitableness of the assertion.

Use 1. *Is* it so, that it is the duty of the Lords people to withdraw from, and come out of every part of a false Worship discovered to them, and that its such a dangerous thing to stay in it after notice given of it: Then let this serve,

First for information, To shew why so many professors miscarry in persecuting seasons; some die in their graces, others in their gifts, others dye to both.

What is the reason that some dye wholly in their profession, and have withered up like dry sticks, and are come to nothing, that were once under a good spirit, and seemed to have a warmth in their hearts for the Lord? Surely it is because they cannot obey Gods call in his Word, in his *Ministers*, in his people, in his providence, *&c.* all which call and cry to them to come away from their false *Rests* and empty Wells, which have no water in them; and that they would come up to *Sion* their *Fathers* dwelling place, and that they would not dishonor the Sanctuary of the Lord by telling the World provision groweth scarce in the Mountains of the Lord, and therefore they must seek to *Egypt* for Corn. O Brethren! this is an evil report brought upon your Father, and the good Land to which you were marching; therefore wonder not if God smite you with blasting and withering; nay, if God give you up to strong

ſtrong deluſions to believe lyes, and ſo ſuch come at laſt to be worſe than nothing. The hinderance to this Work is fearfulneſſe and ſelf-love; ſeparating-work is attended with too much difficulty to be ſubmitted unto in perſecuting ſeaſons; therefore men obey man rather than God: And this makes God turn in with ſuch Judgements upon them, and doth ſurround their borders with deſtruction, Jer. 17.5.6. *Thus ſaith the Lord; Curſed be the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arm; and whoſe heart departeth from the Lord; for he ſhall be like the heath in the deſert, and ſhall not ſee when good cometh, but ſhall inhabit the parched places in the Wilderneſs, and in a Salt Land, and not inhabited.*

Secondly, Let it inform you where ſome men are, and what they ſhould and ought to do.

Firſt, Where ſome men are, I add this, becauſe ſome ages of the World do afford a generation of men that cannot, or will not believe what their eyes ſee before them; which is not only theirs, but others unhappineſſe for their ſakes, who do depend upon their Light for direction: *I* ask the queſtion brethren, Are there not ſome good men and women living at this day in ſome part of the world, that my Text calls aloud unto, to make haſt out of *Myſterie Babylon*? Are there not ſome who live where theſe notes given of *Miſterie Babylon*, rangeth up and down about their ears, and are like ſo many Frogs creeping up and down before their eyes in every Pariſh.

Firſt, Is there not on foot that called Worſhip, which hath for it's Foundation only the Cuſtoms, Traditions, and Jnventions of men, that can ſhew nothing for it ſelf but the traditions of the Elders.

Secondly, Js there not this likewiſe in the World (known to the godly) which men call Worſhip, which hath ſhut out the Commandments of God, witneſſe the ſecond commandment which is ſhut out by bowing to the holy Altar: Witneſſe alſo the Sabbath of our Lord's day, what toleration is there given to youth and others to live looſe on that day, to drink in an Ale-houſe till they wallow in their vomit! &c. Any thing almoſt may be done on that day, except it be meeting together for the exerciſe of pure Goſpel-Worſhip: Js not this the cry of the Promoters of that Worſhip, You muſt have a ſpecial

care you break not the traditions of the Elders; so the directions of the Fathers be well observed, it's no matter, what be comes of the commandments of *God*, or the writings of the Apostles. I say, Have not your eyes seen this, or your ears heard this some where in the World,

Thirdly, *Is* there not that which is prest and imposed upon the *Consciences* of men for Worship, which was cried up mostly by the rude and ignorant of the times, which had neither a good mans pen or tongue one of a thousand, to speak or plead for it; but only, or mostly such who neither can see any spirituall Worship of Christ, or if they could, yet they cannot subject to it, Rom. 8 7. *Because the carnall mind is enmity against God for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.*

And observe, the rude rabble cry not up this Worship for nought, they have some hopes (undoubtedly) to be indulged in their wickednesse, while others are persecuted for their piety; and without doubt they judge that they have sufficient ground for their hope, and the truth is, *I* am not able to contradict them,

Fourthly, Have not your eyes seen, or your ears heard that cryed up and imposed for Worship in the World, which cannot support it self but by using outward violence, and cruelty on mens persons, liberties, estates and lives? A practice so contrary to Christ, his Apostles, and so repugnant to his glory and honor as God; then *I* say, This is that which by the Word of God you are commanded to come out of, and in Christ's Name, and for his sake to witness against, as you will answer the contrary at the great day of account when the secrets of all mens hearts shall be judged by the Gospel. Where ever you may be cast in the World, and shall see or meet with this kind of Worship, this is the thing your souls must do, namely, to keep from it, and witnesse against it as a vile and evil thing, *or else you will walk naked, and men shall see your shame;* which will be the portion of compliers.

Obj. But what shall we do then, supposing we should be cast into such a part of the World, though we should escape the more gross things which may be done in the Worship of God, may we not join in some things? As for example, may we not hear those Ministers preach who do conform to

an idolatrous and superstitious Worship?

Ans. No, no.

Obj *But we mean those that have been looked on formerly as good men, and able Ministers of the New-Testament.*

Ans. What do you mean by good men? if you mean by good men, persons retaining a form of godliness, as *Paul* speaks to *Timothy*, 2 Tim. 3. 5. but denying the power thereof, &c. then as good as they are, they are to be withdrawn from. But if you mean in Scriptural sence good men, I say, that those who are by many looked upon to be the best of the complying *Ministers*, are in *Scripture*-judgment the worst; for the Scripture stileth that man good or faithful, which is all one, *that sweareth and changeth not, although it be to his hurt*, Psal. 15. 4. Now if he be to be judged a faithful, or a good man which sweareth and will not alter or change, although it be to his great hurt; How dare you call that man good which makes no scruple to do that which is directly contrary to what he hath solemnly vowed and covenanted, and not only so, but to renounce the oath he hath taken, and the vow he hath made to his God, notwithstanding he remains convinced, that the main design of that vow and covenant was the glory of God, and the advancement of the *Kingdom* of Christ, by endeavouring after purity in Worship, and holiness in life.

Obj. *But such it may be do it not willingly, they would not if they could help it.*

Ans. Indeed the more of the will there is in any sin, the more sinfulness there is in that sin; and on the contrary, for a soul to be able to say, *It's not* I, *but sin that dwells in me*, may be a very great relief to a soule that lieth under the sence of the burden of sin; but it's humbly conceived, that Ministers conforming to the inventions of men in matters of Worship, *unwillingly*, can be no relief at all to them, but that it doth rather heighten and aggravate their sin, and that for such reasons as these.

1. The greater the Light is, and the stronger the convictions are against which men sin, the greater is their sin: Now the plain English of mens conforming against their wills, is, that they conform against their light, conscience, vows, covenants,

nants, &c. 2 To sin deliberately, is to sin provokingly; *Davids*, deliberate sin cost him the breaking of his bones: Conforming Ministers were thus far favoured of God, as that the temptation was not suffered to come violently upon them; they had a considerable time to consult God's Word, their own vows, covenants, sermons, prayers, &c, before they conformed. 3. To sin upon choice is a fearful way of sinning; these men were put to their choice, Either conform, or lose your livings; your fine Houses, Orchards, Glebe-Lands, Tythes, &c. Here 'twill be good to mind the Spirit of the ancient Worthies, *Heb.* 11.24,25,26,35. 4. To sin designedly is a dreadful way of sinning as thus, should I not conform, I should lose my fat benefice, and then *I* should not be able to pay such a debt, purchase such a piece of Land, and besides, *Thomas* and *Mary* must go without their portions, and also *I* should lose the favour of my Lord and Patron, &c. Whereas could I but keep it two or three years longer, I should be able to accomplish my designs, and then I could give off with less damage. To conclude this, if there be any thing in this argument, *Daniel* need not have been cast into the Lyons Den, nor the three children into the fiery Furnace; the one might have omitted prayer, and the other have bowed to the image; and when they had done, they might have made this plea, that they obeyed the Kings command unwillingly, and therefore innocent; so that in this objection there is no weight.

Obj. *These men conform that they might have liberty to preach.*

Ans. God stands not in need of our sin to advance his glory; he can make *Pauls* imprisonment a means of conversion, as well as *Pauls* Ministry, *Phil.* 1.12, 13, 14. *Pauls* persecution tended to the furtherance of the Gospel, and made other Ministers bold to preach.

Object. *But some of them preach truths, and have great gifts.*

Ans. Neither of these grounds are sufficient for us to hear men preach; for if so, then the rankest Jesuit or Priest in *Rome* may be heard; for they are both as able to preach as any you mean, and some truths they preach: But this principle (if you take not heed) will serve you in nothing, unless it be to lead you into *Rome* ere you are aware of it.

Obj.

Obj. *But doth their little compliance cause God to leave their gifts, as that we may not expect a blessing by them.*

Ans. Do not call that a little evil which dishonors God so much, strengthens the hearts and hands of idolaters, and stumbles weak souls, confirms Hereticks, and sets all the sound Christians a mourning in corners.

Secondly, See whether God will bless such mens gifts or no: we will examine the case by *Israels* case of old, Hos. 9. 8. 9. 14 *The Watchman of Ephraim was with my God; but the Prophet is a snare of a Fowler in all his ways, and hatred in the house of his God. They have deeply corrupted themselves as in the days of Gibeah; therefore he will remember their iniquity, he will visit their sins: Give them, O Lord, what wilt thou give? Give them a miscarrying womb, and dry breasts.* The case was this, that after *Jeroboam* was made King of the ten Tribes, 1 *King.* 12. there was a necessity upon him to stop the peoples going up to *Jerusalem* to worship, that so he might prevent the Priests of the Lord from sowing Sedition among them, in order to the bringing again the ten tribes to the Crown and Scepter at *Jerusalem*, 1 King. 12. 27, 28, 29. *If this people go up to do sacrifice in the house of the Lord, at Jerusalem, then shall the hearts of this people turn again unto their Lord, even unto Rehoboam King of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam King of Judah.* And therefore to prevent that, in policy he framed a way of Worship called the Worship of Calves; ver. 28 29. *Whereupon the King took counsel, and made two Calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold thy gods O Israel which brought thee up out of the Land of Egypt; and he set one in Bethel, and put the other in Dan.* Now having done this, he fits his Priests suitable to his Worship; they were made of the lowest or basest of the people: And as for the rest of the Priests that would not serve his purpose, they must turn out of their places. But as always it hath been; so that was, That some of the then good men, rather then they would make themselves uncapable of the work of the Ministry, or rather of the profits, of a good place, did think it to be their duty (their interest I mean, for such men do seldom dissent their principles, and conform out of duty) to comply with the present ceremonies of that age, which they were by special Order from

from the King enjoining to submit unto. Now the question might be, Whether that the people might not incourage these complying Prophets and Priests by hearing them preach, or being present at their Worship, &c. especially some of the best and most holy of them; especially considering these Priests could not help it, but would have had it otherwise if they could? And there seems to be a clear foundation laid for their scrupling to hear any of the Priests, from the Prophets coming up, who protested against the whole of the Worship, 1 King 13. 1,2. *And behold there came a man of God out of Judah by the Word of the Lord unto Bethel, and Jeroboam stood by the Altar to burn incense, and he cryed against it in the Word of the Lord, and said, O Altar, Altar, thus saith the Lord, Behold a child shall be born unto the house of* David, *Josiah by name, and upon thee shall he offer the Priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and mens bones shall be burnt upon thee.* Now you may see the question throughly answered and put beyond all doubt in the Prophesie of *Hosea*, whose work was principally to deal with the ten tribes, *Hos.* 9. 8 9. *The Watchman of Ephraim was with my God, but, &c.* Here the question from the people to the Prophet might be this, as it was most like it was, *Whether God had never owned in the Ministry some of those Prophets which now comply? If so, then why not still? And if so, why might not they hear them as before, notwithstanding their conformity?* Saith *Hosea*, I grant it's true, the Prophet or Watchman of *Israel* was once with his God; that is, he once did at last pretend Commission from God, he stood in the counsel of God, he asserted God's Covenant, he was numbred up with God's Watchmen, he made it his design to forward God's Worship, admitting of nothing into it but what had its foundation in the Word of God; but now he is altered, and become another minded man; he hath left the counsel of God, and hath given up himself to the counsel of *Jeroboam*; he hath renounced his former commission and ordination, and hath taken up another ordination from those spiritual Fathers of the Church whom *Jereboam* hath appointed to ordain for his VVorship: He was once numbred up amongst the diligent VVatchmen; but now among those that can, nay that do watch the *Pot* twice to the *Pulpit*'s once; he now makes it his design

to

to preach up another interest, and unsay what he hath been a saying for these many years; he hath left telling that the Word of God must be your Rule for Faith and Worship, and tells you now, you ought to take the Councils of the Church, and you must subject your Faith to the opinion of the Fathers; and therefore *he is a snare of the Fowler in all his ways*; that is, God is so far from owning him now in a way of direction, &c. as that he may be able to direct others in the good old way, as, that God hath left him to himself, to be ensnared by his own vain heart; and being ensnared himself, he becomes a snare to others that shall wait upon him; O read Jer.23.v.11,12,32. *For both Prophet and Priest are prophane; yea, in my House have I found their wickedness, saith the Lord; wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery ways in the darkness, they shall be driven on, & fall therein; for I will bring evil upon them, even the year of their visitation, saith the Lord*; as also v.13 32. *Behold, I am against them that prophesie false dreams, saith the Lord, & do tell them that cause my people to err by their lyes & by their lightness, yet I sent them not, nor commanded them; therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord.*

But he is a hatred in the house of his God, that is three ways: Firſt, God hates all that he doth, for his Apostasie sake; hates his *gifts*, his *parts*, his *prayers*, his *sermons*, his *duties*, all is abhorred by the Lord, Psal.50.16. *But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my Statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant into thy mouth, &c.*

Secondly, He is hated as to his actions, by the Church of God; all his Brethren withdraws from him as a man not to be accompanied with any further; until he repents for abusing God, his own Conscience, for strengthening the hands of the wicked, for dealing so basely in the Covenant of the Lord; and accordingly you know the Rule is, That if any man that is called Brother, be wicked in his life, or walketh disorderly, he is to be withdrawn from, 1 *Cor.* 5 11. 2 *Thess.*3.14.

Thirdly, He is a hatred in the House of God; that is, such a *Ministry* is given to a Nation or people as a fruit of God's anger and wrath; and also they do by their superstitions and prophaneness further provoke God to pour out his wrath upon

such a Nation or people: The reason of this the Prophets charge exhibited against the complying Priests and Prophets of that day, you have in *Hos.* 9.9. *They have deeply corrupted themselves as in the days of Gibeah; therefore he will remember their iniquity, he will visit their sins*: And the judgement you have denounced against these backsliders, in ver. 14. *Give them, O Lord; what wilt thou give? Give them a miscarrying Womb, and dry Breasts.* And this is the peoples Judgement as well as their own: Now what is it to have a miscarrying Womb? is it not to have the fruit perish before it comes to perfection? So shall it be in this case with them, and those that join with them, nothing shall come to any perfection. It is true, they preach truths; I, but it shall not profit the Hearer, Isa. 29. 13, 14. *Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouths, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men; therefore behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work amongst this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder; for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.* They may hear and hear, and all to no purpose: *They shall be ever learning, but shall never be able to come to the knowledge of the truth*; 2 Tim. 3. 7.

Give them dry breasts: Now what are the Ministers breasts? for it's of that he is speaking: Are they not the gifts and parts of the Ministers, as, or from which the people suck Truth and Light, and Knowledge, they being attended with the Spirit of God; but they shall have dry and sapless Breasts, such as shall yeild no moysture, no sap, no milk, no food; as if the Prophet should say, You that are so zealous for your publike hearing the backsliding Priests, tell me, What's your end in going? is it to escape *Jeroboam*'s penalties? you are (it may be) afraid to bring your selves in trouble; if this be all, surely God will meet with you, and your iniquity will be found out, hide it as close as you will; but if it be to reap any spirittual profit or advantage by them, then I tell you, you are deceived, God hath left them to themselves because they have left God; think not that gifts and parts will do you good; I tell you, if you place any thing in these things apart from the blessing of God, you are deceived, for it is nothing without the Spirit of

God

God can make them ful of light, life, and comfort, and ſtrength, and growth; therefore be not deceived, you do but ſuck at empty breaſts; and if you abide here, it cannot belong ere you will pine, and languiſh, and waſt away in your graces, and in your ſpirituals, if that you look not to it, and ſo you'l come to be nothing at laſt; and ſo the end will be worſe then the beginning with. you.

Uſe. Is it ſo, that it's the duty of the Lord's people to come out of every part of *Myſterie Babylon's* Worſhip? O then, how much doth this reprove the profeſſors of this day living in *Europe*? And how much is it to be bewailed to ſee how little of the call of God in this Word is upon men and womens hearts? O! that the Lords people ſhould rather take pleaſure in the Kingdom of darkneſs, then in the Kingdom of the Lord Jeſus! O that the Lord would root up this principle of Earthly mindedneſs out of the hearts of his good people, even Miniſters as well as others, becauſe by them the poor people are led up and down in the World! O this earthly heart doth too too much reign in the Lords Miniſters and people at this day, which doth gape after honor, pleaſure, and much of this life, which doth keep men from obeying their Lord and Maſter, and ſhuts up the ears of men againſt his call, that let Chriſt ſay what he wil in his Word, they cannot hear it: Let him ſhew them the from, faſhion and beauty of his houſe, for their parts they have no mind, no encouragement to the thing; the Wages which Chriſt gives in the ſetting about this Work, doth not ſute the carnal, ſenſual appetite of men, as Antichriſts Wages doth; for Chriſt's wages is ſpiritual, little of the honor, glory and pleaſure of this Life, is there going along whith Chriſt's Work; therefore it is that men rather think it beſt to abide in *Babylon*, hoping at the laſt that ſhe will be pleaſed to put them into one of the Prieſts Office, that ſo they may have a piece of bread, according to that old ſaying, 1 *Sam.* 2. 36. O! this is a curſed frame of Spirit, which ſhuts not only the ears againſt Gods call, but the heart alſo againſt believing, that is, from doing the work of Faith, John. 5. 44, ſaith Chriſt, *How then can ye believe which receive honor one of another, & ſeek not the honor that cometh from God only?* This is the ground of that diſ-freedom

upon mens ſpirits as to a coming out of *Myſterie Babylon*; they muſt then leave their ſweet morſels, and their rich vines, their fine habitations which they builded while in *Myſterie Babylon*, about which was laid out ſo much of their time and treaſure: O this was it which made the Lords people ſo loath to come out of litteral *Babylon*; they had planted Vineyards and Oliveyards, and good Houſes, which was the fruits of many years labour, pain and charges; now to leave all this, they neither could hear or believe that it was Gods Will or Call, but rather that it was the forwardneſs of a hot-headed *Nehemiah*, or the peeviſhneſs of a brain-ſick *Ezra*, and therefore it's ſaid, that ſuch as went up from *Babylon* to ſet forward the Work of the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, they were only ſuch whoſe ſpirits were ſtirred up by God, *Ezra* 1.5. Now that which ſtaid the reſt of the people behind from going up to the Work of the Lord at *Jeruſalem*, you may ſee what it was *Hag.* 1.4. It was their cieled Houſes; O this is to be ſuſpected is the cauſe why the good people of God ſtay ſo behind in *Babylon*, notwithſtanding ſo many of their brethren are gone up to Temple-work before their eyes: O their Cieled Houſes have too great a hanck upon their hearts! This is the Miniſters ſin as well as the peoples: Oh! but the diſhonor that Jeſus Chriſt hath by it, it is intolerable, and their own diſgrace not a little occaſioned thereby; Methink to hear the Antichriſtian party to ſcorn, vilifie, deride, contemn and condemn good Miniſters and others for their ſeeming willingneſs to comply at laſt with them, it grieves my ſoul: As for the good Miniſters themſelves, who yet do conform but in part, how hath my ſoul been grieved in ſecret to hear the confident proud words ſome adverſaries to the truth have uttered concerning thoſe good men, arguing from their preſent compliance with them, in joyning with them in their Woſhip, That it will not be long ere theſe hot Covenanters will all fall into full conformity, although their coming will be before they are welcome: And this their coming to them, and joyning with them, they make it but a ſign of what further they have a mind to do, did not ſhame hinder them; and ſo they report them to be men of no [illegible] that can ſwallow any thing, men not fit to be truſted either in Church or State,

State; they say, they thought they had made a Morsel so bitter they could never have savoured it, so big that they would never have swallowed it; but they now see their throat is like an open Sepulchre, or like the grave, it will stick at nothing: Thus they wound the honor of God, and put his Son to open shame, and expose the most holy, most pure and undefiled Religion, which they once were zealous for, to the scorn and contempt of Nations; not that they do it intentionally, they mean not so; but what ever they mean, the Enemy taketh advantage by their practices so to scorn and reproach as before-said. Besides, how in their own credit are they trampled upon? Likewise by this means comes poor honest hearts to be endangered, whose practice mostly is rather to walk by example then precept; for they say, Our Ministers, our Pastors, and our aged Christians they do thus and thus, and surely they know what they do: Thus the head leads the heart, and the heart the whole body, as it was in *Israels* days of old, Isa. 1.5.6. *Ye revolt more and more, the whole Head is sick, and the whole heart is faint:* O what heart so hard that cannot ake for this great evil! *Be astonished O ye Heavens at this, and be ye horribly afraid; let the Sun and the Moon cloud themselves at this great and horrible evil which the Nations of the Earth are overspread withall, that the Lords people should leave the Fountains of living waters, and hew to themselves broken Cisterns that can hold no water.* O that the Lords people would lay this to heart, and mourn deeply before the Lord for it, that so we may be hid in the day of the Lords wrath; for certainly without great repentance, here is little sign of any thing designed in Heaven but ruine and total destruction to many of the professors of this generation; this general sin calls for general destruction, if the Lords people do not *turn into the hand of the smiter, but revolt more and more*: It's much to be feared, that some professors in the world have by compliance with the men of the Earth, laid foundation not only for their own, but their brethrens ruine. The Lord have mercy upon us, and give us his holy Spirit to guide us into the knowledge of his Will, that we may not provoke him to our undoing, for Jesus Christ his sake.

I shall

I shall give some directions what to do in this thing, that we may in some measure come up to our duty, and may be kept from compliance in false Worship.

First, Labour to keep a Watch upon your souls against these two evils, which often times in *Satans* hand proves mortal to poor souls; that is, *Terror* and *Error*.

As to the first, *viz. Terror*, take this Rule from him who wisheth wel to your souls: Never look into what you may suffer as to your dutyin coming off from *Mysterie Babylon*; I say, look not on suffering with both your eyes at once; for as God hath made you with two eyes, so imploy them as you ought in this case; fix one eye only on your troubles, and the other eye on your Christ: Let Christ the disposer of all afflictions, be much in your eye, and this will certainly take away (through God's blessing) the terror of your afflictions; you know a Lyon is a dreadful thing for a man to meet by himself; but if we meet it chained up in the hand of his keeper, this takes away all our fear: So look you on all your terrors & afflictions that are like to attend you in the discharging of your duty in this matter, but as a Lyon chained up in the hand of a dear Saviour, who will not suffer one Link of the Chain to go one jot further then will make for his glory and your good, *Psal.*76. 10. *Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.*

Secondly, There is another evil which you must set a strict Watch against, or you may fall at last; and that is not *Terror*, but *Error*; by which Satan overcomes thousands of professors; and this is the main Engine that he fights with against Christians, and but too too often prevails, *Mat.*24.11. *And many false Prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many*: So verse the 24th, with 2 *Pet.*2.3.

Obj. But you may ask me, *How shall we prevent our danger in this case?*

Ans. Be careful always to observe this Rule, That that advice given you at any time, by any man (in a day when most people in the Country where you live, are convinced that it is a day of Antichrists getting ground upon Christ) which advice given, shall by the practice it puts you upon, take you off,

or

or set you free from those afflictions which most of the godly are involved in for the Worship of Christ in the same Country you live in, is very dangerous advice: And I say, take heed of that man for his advice sake, though he be reputed never so godly and able; for it savours too much of the flesh to be good advice for the soul; As to this of Satans deceiving or leading away of the people of God into *Error*, the danger may be greatest among good men, or persons under such a consideration, who are many times very instrumental in *Satans* hand to deceive one another; for Satan knows that is a vain thing for him to make use of an open apostatized *Judas* in this Work, amongst some Christians; but he must get into a good *Peter*, and agitate or act him amongst the Brethren, who was no less then twice catched in this case; once was he made use of by Satan upon our Saviour, *Matth.*16.21,22,23. who was by our Saviour sufficiently rebuked for his advice, when he said to him, *Get thee behind me Satan.*

The second time that this good man was made use of as an instrument in the hand of Satan to give unsound advice to the Lords people in an evil day, was to the Church of the *Galatians*, Gal.2 12,13,14. by whose advice both *Barnabas* and the whole Church were like to be drawn away at once, who was again sufficiently rebuked for it by *Paul*.

Therefore this should teach Christians to have a special care and heed of men, yea of good men as well as bad men; for both may be alike dangerous to us, if we are not the more watchful: Therefore *Micah's* advice is good in this case *Mic.*7.5. *Trust not in a friend, put no confidence in a brother or a guide; keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom*; and the advice of the Father of Mercies will afford you the best good in the end. Therefore listen to that, Isa.8.20. *To the Law and to the Testimony, if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them.* And for a further confirmation of this wholsome advice, our Saviour hath backt it with these words, John.5.39 *Search the Scriptures, &c.*

Likewise there are another sort of men which one age hath brought forth in the World, which you should keep strict watch and Ward against, whose hearts were never right with

God,

God, but all along have consulted their honor and greatness in this life, and that way which would bring them in most, of that they would be for, be it what it would; such who seem to stand at some little distance from the thing called Conformity, yet have given cause to fear, that their hearts are not right in this thing; that the honor of God is not chief in their eye, in their seeming Non-conformity, but rather their own honor and praise; for if it were the honor of God that these men have in their eyes in their scrupling conformity so much, why then can they joyn with that which they have so protested against as an evil thing? Would you not abhor that zeal in your Wives or Husbands, that should seem to protest against the practice of Whoredom, and yet you cannot keep them out of a Whore-house hardly one day in a Week? So that we have cause to fear, that the Non-conformity that is so much pretended unto in the World by some persons, ariseth from hence, They had in their hearers ears suddenly and hastily spoken their pleasure against Conformity in a day when they thought they had too great an interest in the times they lived in, for such a thing to take place.

And that now they see things to run in a Channel so contrary to expectation, and what they thought once, their great fear is, should they close with the thing called Conformity, it would drive the good people away from them to this separation; a way never approved of by them, the profits of it always were too small.

I will not charge this upon every individual of the non-conforming Ministers, who go further in compliance then their suffering-brethren dare go; I hope some of them do what they do in truth and uprightness of heart and soul; but *I* again say, we have too too great ground to fear this of many of them; the Lord knoweth my heart, who knoweth all things, unto whom I appeal, I speak not this to bespatter any good man or Minister of the Gospel, or that I am glad of matter to cry down this or that party or way, but am more a Friend to that way which these men have professed, then to speak evil of it; but out of the grief of my soul I speak it, being sensible of the great dishonor that comes to God by it, and the dan-

danger that is like to come to you the good people, except there be great care to prevent it, and that general ruine is like to fall from Heaven by it upon the whole of *God's* people, without speedy repentance. And further, to tell you all my thoughes herein, the design which under a Covert *I* fear is carried on by some men in the World, will appear at last to be this, *viz.* That if they can perswade you the good people to go up to *Babylon* first, and so after a while you have been engaged to *Idolatry*(for there is a heart-engaging power in it) then like so many Quarter-Masters to several Troops, they will fall in the rear of you, and so close you up to it; which they suppose they may do without being censured, when they have but once answered your scruple, and perswaded you to go before them; and so you may never come off more till you dye in the plagues of Antichrist, I should much rejoice to be found mistaken herein.

Therefore my further advice to you is, That you would adjoin your selves to those Christians whom you see are found in their principles, and make conscience of their duty, and are to suffer for what they do profess; if you intend the favour and love of *God* to your souls, Cant.1.7. the Spouse enquires after communion with Christ's Flocks, and the reason she gives, is, *For why should I be as them that turn aside, &c.* and in the eighth Verse Christ answereth, *If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids besides the Shepherds tents.* Whence we may gather, that communion with Saints is a precious preservative against turning aside, against apostacie, So Jer.6.16. *Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls; &c.* And so I shall conclude this direction with that word in Jer.13.17. *But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride, and mine eyes shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the Lord's Flock is carryed away captive.*

My next direction to you is, Be much in converse with the Word of God: O this is God's Store-house of direction and comforts; here thou shalt not miss of a sure path; men may (as thou hast heard) misdirect thee, and lead thee out of the right way, shouldst thou lean on creatures, and make this mans

judgement, or that mans judgement the Rule of thy Faith, they may undo thy ſoul; *but as for God, his way is perfect, the Word of the Lord is a tryed Word*, Pſal. 18.30. How hath it been a tryed Word? Two ways; firſt, as to the infallibility of it, it leads a ſoul unerringly, and that without danger to happineſſe; Secondly, As to the ſtrength of it, for ſo we underſtand the word tryed, ſometimes when a thing will not break that we tread on, or lean upon for help. O! ſo is the Word of God tryed Word, you need not fear the ſtrength of it, you may hang the weight of your immortal ſouls upon it without fear, it will not deceive you; *fear not* Therefore ſaith *David*, Pſal. 119.15, 16. *I will meditate in thy precepts, and have reſpect unto thy ways; I will delight my ſelf in thy Statutes, and will not forget thy Word.* You may perceive the profitableneſs of the Word of God to your ſouls, by the often endeavours of Hell, whoſe main deſign hath been to pluck it out of the World, or, at leaſt wiſe ſo to obſcure it, that you might not reap the benefit either of its direction or comfort. Secondly, Here thou wilt have a ſea of comfort and conſolation to bear thy ſoul up under the greateſt aſſaults thou ſhalt meet with from Satan or the Beaſt, I know the Dragon doth uſe to pour out his Flood of perſecution after thoſe that leave his Kingdom; but the Word of God is ſo full of comfort, that it will heal all again, as it's ſaid of *Iſrael* of old, ſo may I apply it to thee, Pſal. 107. 19. 20. *In their troubles then they cry unto the Lord, and he ſaveth them out of their diſtreſſes; he ſent his Word and healed them, and delivered them from their deſtructions.* O! this is that hath comforted the Martyrs of old, and hath made their way to the ſtake ſo ſweet and comfortable: O the rich promiſes that are there for thy ſoul to feed upon in any ſtraits, the encouragements to the ſharpeſt of duties! Take a taſt of them, Matt. 10.28. *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the ſoul*, &c. Rom. 8.18. *For I reckon, that the ſufferings of this preſent time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in us.* 1 Joh. 3.2. *Beloved, now we are the ſons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be, but we know that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him; for we ſhall ſee him as he is*, Rev. 2.7. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the Churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Tree of Life which is in the midſt of the Paradiſe of God.*

God. And ver. 17. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the Churches; To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the hidden Manna, and will give him a white ſtone, and in the ſtone a new name written, which no man knoweth ſaving he that receiveth it.* So Rev. 3. 10, 11, 12. chap. 19. 7. 8. and the 20. 1, 2, 3, 4. with 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. *I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the Faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of righteouſneſs, which the Lord the righteous Judge ſhall give me at that day,* &c. I ſhall conclude this direction with commending to you two Texts of Scripture, *Heb.* 10. 35. *Caſt not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward.* And Heb. 12 28. *Wherefore we receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have Grace whereby we may ſerve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.*

Laſt Direction. Be much in prayer to God for counſel and direction in the matter of your duty; Prayer is the life of your ſouls, as the ſoul is the life of your bodies. It's a rare thing to hear of the miſcarrying of a praying ſoul; Prayer brings God down from Heaven for you, Ex. 3. 7, 8. *And the Lord ſaid, I have ſurely ſeen the afflictions of my people which are in Egypt, & have heard their cryes, &c. and I am come down to deliver them, &c,* it brings down the holy Spirit into your hearts to enlighten, comfort, ſupport and counſel you in the darkeſt of times; O what relief have *David* and *Jacob* gotten this way in dark hours! Satan knows the advantages praying-ſouls gets this way, that's the reaſon he makes it ſo difficult to the ſoul, and ſtirs up that inward oppoſition againſt it; but be not diſcouraged at it, but go on in this way of prayer, beg hard of God for an enlightened underſtanding, that you may diſcern the wiles of the ſubtil enemy of your ſouls and his agents who are at work for him in the World, that you may have a heart given you to adventure upon your duty whet ever you ſuffer; and in this Work of prayer you have God's people enlarged with you, Chriſt engaged in the Work himſelf for you; therefore ſurely you will prevail and overcome in the end. Remember, it's for a Crown you ſtrive; and for a Kingdom you run, and you ſhall reap if you faint not. I ſhall conclude my directions with preſenting you theſe two places of Scripture, Pſal. 126. 6. *He that goes forth and weepeth, bearing precious ſeed, ſhall doubtleſs come again with rejoycing, bringing his ſheaves with him.* And 1 Cor. 15. 58

Therefore my beloved Brethren, be ye ſtedfaſt, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, foraſmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Signs of deliverance from Antichriſt.

But First I ſhall anſwer an Objection.

Some poor ſouls may ſay, *The yoke of Antichriſt is ſo laſting and perpetual, that I am diſcouraged; he hath been ſo many hundreds of years in the World, and yet is, and yet may be, I am afraid therefore, that in coming off from Antichriſt, my trouble will not only be ſharp, but laſting, and ſo I fear I ſhall not hold out.*

I anſwer, firſt, by telling thee, it is thy duty to come out of the Worſhip of *Myſterie* Babylon; and if thou meeteſt with never ſo much hardſhips, and though it laſt never ſo long, yet ſoul thou art not to diſpute in this caſe, but thy duty is to obey the call of God: What, wilt thou reaſon thy ſelf out of Heaven, and the favour of thy God to all Eternity, for fear of a little ſuffering here, which laſteth but for a moment? What, are Antichriſt's cruelties in this life, in compariſon to that wrath which ſhall fall upon thoſe which ſhall be found worſhipping the Beaſt or his *I*mage, or that ſhall receive his mark in their fore-heads, or in their right hands, *Rev.* 14. 10. 11. *The ſame ſhall drink of the Wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the Cup of his indignation; and he ſhall be tormented in the preſence of the holy Angels with fire and brimſtone, and in the preſence of the Lamb; & the ſmoake of the torment aſcendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no reſt day nor night, who worſhip the Beaſt and his image, and whoſoever receiveth the mark of his Name.*

Secondly, *I* anſwer, How knoweſt thou that the man of ſin, or the Antichriſt ſhall reign ſo long in the World? *I* am not of your opinion, but do think that his time to be judged is come, and he is not like to continue many years more in the World, but his yoke of Tyranny ſhall be broken, and his bands of cruelty burſt aſunder from off the necks of the Lord's people, *and the righteous Nation ſhall be made to rejoyce, and they ſhall come to Zion with ſhouting, and everlaſting joy ſhall be upon their heads;* for the blood under the Alter hath prevailed againſt Myſterie Babylon, which cryed day and night againſt her, ſaying, *How long, O Lord, holy and true, will it be ere thou avenge our blood on them that dwell upon the Earth?* But for the hope and comfort

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of the Lords people touching this thing of perioding *Babylons* day of ſin, blaſphemy and cruelty, take thoſe ſigns that follow.

Firſt, Obſerve, that when God doth at any time put his peoples necks under any part of *Babylons* yoke in the World, God doth prefix a time how long that yoke ſhall remain upon them, to a day, yea an hour, beyond which it ſhall not be, in deſpite of all the craft, wiſdom, policy and power either of earth or hell; ſee Gen. 15. 13. with Exod. 12. 51. *And it came to paſs the ſelf-ſame day that the Lord did bring the children of Iſrael out of Egypt by their armies.* Pſal 102. 13 *Thou ſhalt ariſe and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea the ſet-time is come.*

Secondly, As to the ſigns of removing the yoke off the neck, ſome are taken from the Agents of the man of ſin themſelves; the ſecond ſort are taken from the Saints themſelves,

Firſt; When the adverſaries of truth ſhall more then ordinarily rage againſt the Church and people of God, this is made a note of the ſhortneſs of his Kingdom, Rev. 12. 12. and we may believe it, *The Devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, becauſe he knoweth that he hath but a ſhort time.*

Now why may not the Church of God look for ſudden redemption from this ſign? Was there ever a time that the earth was filled more with rage, and enraged inſtruments againſt the life, power, and ſpirit of truth then at this day? How do the Nations of the earth combine together againſt the Lord, & againſt his annointed Chriſt? What counſels, what endeavours, what combinations are there now on foot againſt the Church, crying out, *Raze her, Raze her down to the ground, let her be no more a Name.* O! then let not this diſcourage you, but rather let it heighten your expectation, for the day of your redemption draweth near.

Second ſign; When they ſhall bitterly blaſpheme the God of Heaven, when a generation of men are let run to this, they cannot be far from ruine, Iſa. 36. 14. 15. *Thus ſaith the King, Let not Hezekiah deceive you, for he ſhall not be able to deliver you; neither let Hezekiah make you truſt in the Lord, ſaying, the Lord will ſurely deliver us, this City ſhall not be delivered into the hand of the King of Aſſyria.* Now in chap. 37. 3. *Thus ſaith Hezekiah, This*

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is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blaſphemy, *&c.* So mind diligently ver. 29. Certainly though God may bear much, yet he wil not bear mens blaſphemy, this toucheth the honor of God too near to ſuffer it to go unpuniſhed. Therefore you ſee how quickly *Sennacherib* tumbled after his blaſphemy. Now was there ever more horrid blaſphemy on foot then at this day in the World? O! what rending and tearing of the Name of God? What daring of God to his face! What ſcorning of the Spirit of God! What higher blaſphemy can there likely be, then to call the moſt holy breathings of the Spirit of God in the hearts of his people, canting, and extemporary ſtuff! O horrid, horrid blaſphemy! how far beyond *Rabſhakeh*'s blaſphemy is this? And if the blaſphemy of a Heathen brought God ſo quick out of Heaven, how much ſooner will ſuch blaſphemy out of the mouths of men profeſſing Chriſtianity, bring God out of Heaven upon men, who ſin ſo directly againſt light, which the other did not: therefore certainly God will not ſtay long from executing his fierce wrath upon ſuch perſons. Antichriſt is cloathed with this ſin; yea, the name of blaſphemy is written upon their foreheads. Therefore look upon the yoke as removing from the neck of the Saints, for the iniquity of the *Amorites* is come to the full.

Third ſign; When they ſhall bitterly vex and oppreſs the Lord's people with their cruelties and oppreſſions, Exod. 3, 7, 8 *And the Lord ſaid, I have ſurely ſeen the afflictions of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reaſon of their Task-Maſters; for I know their ſorrows, and am come down to deliver them out of the hands of the Egyptians, &c.* Pſal. 12 5. *For the oppreſſion of the poor, for the ſighing of the needy, now will I ariſe, ſaith the Lord, I will ſet him in ſafety from him that puffeth at him.* Now judge you of this ſign, how the Nations under the power of the Beaſt abound in this Trade: What riflings, what plunderings, what rending of Eſtates from the poor Chriſtians is there now in the World? What ſhutting up in Priſons week after week is there now on foot in the Nations of the Earth, as if men were pleaſed to delight themſelves with the impriſonment of the Lord's people, as the *Philiſtines* did in the miſery of *Sampſon*.

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This is a clear ſign that God is near, even nearer then theſe men are aware off.

Fourth ſign; When they ſhall faſten their iniquity upon God, Plal 50. 20, 21. *Thou ſitteſt and ſpeakeſt againſt thy Brother; thou ſlandereſt thy own Mothers Son: Theſe things haſt thou done, and I kept ſilence; thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch an one as thy ſelf: But I will reprove thee, and ſet them in order before thine eyes.* When men ſhall in all their impieties conclude, That as they are God's people, ſo their Work are God's Work; O! there is a neceſſity (If *I* may ſo ſpeak) upon *God* to come forth upon the Nations of the Earth, and clear himſelf of this falſe imputation. *Now I* leave you to *judge* of the nearneſs of Gods coming forth at this day. O how is God made the ſtalking-horſe of the wicked action in this day! How doth the Anti-chriſtian party precend to God and his glory in all they do! If they kill and murther the innocent, it is for God; if they ruine the Eſtates and Liberties of the poor ſervants of *Chriſt*, all this is for God; the waſting of ſo many thouſands of Families in the world, all is done in the name of *God*; & thus they make God a murtherous, plundering, waſting and deſtroying God; ſo that the Name which the Scripture gives the Devil, they by their villany, and helliſh practice, and making God the Author of it, they faſten theſe names upon God, and ſo make God appear to be that *Abaddon* and *Apollyon* ſpoken of in Rev. 9. 11. which ſignifieth waſting and deſtruction.

Beſides all this their idolatry in Worſhip, this is done in the name of God. What encouragement think you do theſe men give the *Jews* or *Pagans* to come over to this God, and to becom ſubjects to him? What delight can the Nations take in a God that gives power to his people to kill, murther ruine and deſtroy one another? What think you? is not God bound in point of honor to come forth and clear himſelf of this horrid crime laid upon him by ſuch a generation of men? Surely God will, and the whole World ſhall know, that though God was ſilent under their helliſh villany, yet not a friend to it; and this the World ſhall ſee by God's ſudden tearing them in pieces before their eyes.

Fifth sign; When they shall come to this heigth of sin as to appear in their publike Courts of Judicature visibly and openly to wrest Justice and Judgement towards the innocent; Isa, 59.14.15. *And Judgement is turned away backwark, and Justice standeth afar off; for truth is fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter; yea, truth faileth, and he that departeth from evil, maketh himself a prey; and the Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment.*

Sixth sign, (put this to the former, for they must go hand in hand) That is when together with their violating of Justice they shall muster up their Forces and Armies to break in like a Flood upon the remnant of the Womans Seed, that is a sure sign of their sudden fall, Isa.59.19. 20. *So shall they fear the Name of the Lord from the West, and his glory from the rising of the Sun, when the Enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a Standard against him, and the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and to them that turn iniquity from Jacob, saith the Lord.* Now examine the Nations of the Earth by these signs.

Frst, Do you find a Nation or a People under the *Power* of Antichrist, that coms under this sign spoken of in the 14, and 15. ver. that are grown so bad as that they have turned judgment backwards, and made Justice to stand afar off, and have made truth to fall in the streets, and will not suffer equity to enter? And do you find a Nation preparing themselves in a way of mustering up their Forces, to fall in like a Flood upon the Lord's people, which is the sign in the 19. and 20. verses? And in the same place do you find the standard of the Lord lifted up, which is a holy Spirit of courage and resolution to hold it out for God, that let the Enemy do what they can, yet they will rather suffer then sin? Why then should we not conclude our selves near deliverance from the Tyranny and Yoke of Antichrist in the World? If we do but consult the 20. and 21.v. of the same 59. of *Isaiah*, for they are not to be separated; *O then rejoyce ye righteous, for your God is coming with a strong hand to pluck you out of the Enemy's hands, and such as hate you, shall bear rule over you no more.*

Second sort of signs are taken from the *Saints* themselves; Frst, When a mighty Spirit of Prayer is poured forth upon the

the Lords people, Zech. 12. 10. *And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of Grace and Supplication, &c.* See *Nehemiah, Daniel*, which was a certain fore-runner of the *Jews* deliverance out of literal *Babylon*. Now was there ever more of this given out since the primitive times, then at this day upon the Lord's people? O then be not discouraged, but bear up head and heart; for as this was a sign of deliverance to the *Jews* from the yoke and tyrannie of old *Babylon*, so wil it prove to the Lord's people now. Second sign when this thing, *viz.* Deliverance shall particularly be put upon the hearts of the Lord's people in general, as that they find bears weight upon their spirits when they are before the Lord, as *Neh.* 1, 8, 9. Now see the City and Temple that was in particular put with weight upon his heart in prayer before the Lord, Dan 9. 18, 19. *O my God, encline thine ear and hear, open thine eyes and behold our desolations, and the City which is called by thy Name, for we do not present our Supplications before thee for our own righteousness, but for thy great tender mercies: O Lord hear, O Lord forgive, O Lord hearken and do: defer not for thine own sake, O my God: for thy City and thy people are called by thy Name.* You see the City and Temple that lay wast, were in particular put with weight upon his heart in prayer before the Lord. Now examine and ask the Lord's people what is set with most weight upon their hearts in prayer when before God? Is it *Zion*'s deliverance? *Is* it the City and Temple of *Jerusalem*? Is it the People and Cause of God that bears much in upon their hearts when before the Lord in prayer? If so, this is a sign that the Work is at the birth, and wil come forth speedily, though all the Devils in Hell oppose it, Rev. 16. 1. *And I heard a great voice out of the Temple saying to the seven Angels, go your ways and pour out the Vials of the wrath of God upon the Earth.* Now what was the voice of the Temple, but the general agreeing consent of the Christians about the time of Antichrists ruine, which information came upon them by the fruit of prayers, being seconded with the strong intercession of Christ, Rev. 8. 3, 4, 5. *And another Angel came and stood at the Altar, having a golden Censer, and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar which was before the Throne, and the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the Saints,*

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ascended up before God out of the Angels hand. And the Angel took the Censer, and filled it with fire of the Altar, & cast it into the earth, and there were Voices, & Thunderings, & Lightnings, & an Earthquake. Third sign is, When the Lords people are brought to that pass that they see no way of deliverance on this side Heaven, according to the Proverb, *Man's extremity will be God's opportunity.* Deut. 32. 36. *For the Lord will judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and that there is none shut up or left.* This was *Habbakkuk's* rejoicing-time, Hab. 3. 17, 18. *Although the Fig-tree shall not blossome, neither shall fruit be in the Vines, the labour of the Olive shall fail, and the fields shall yeild no meat, the Flock shall be cut off from the Fold, and there shall be no Herd in the Stall, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation.* Because he knew when things seemed so sad, and deliverance looked so far off, then according to God's way it was most near. Ezek. 37. 3. *And he said unto me, Son of man, Can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest.* So in Rev. 11. 7, 8, 9. *And when they shall have finished their Testimony, the Beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them, and their dead bodies shall lye in the street of the great City, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified, and they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.* So ver. 10, 11. *And they that dwell upon the Earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another, because these two Prophets tormented them that dwelt on the Earth. And after three days and an half the Spirit of Life from God entred into them, and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them which saw them.*

Now examine whether the people of God be brought to this pass yea or no, wholly killed as to outward help, and in the grave as to any hope of deliverance from, or by any creature. Fourth sign, When a general expectation is upon the Church for deliverance, then look for it, Psal. 37. 9, 34. *For evil doers shall be cut off, but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the Land, when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.* Now was there ever more of that found then at this day amongst the Lord's people? What looking

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Laſtly, When divided Chriſtians ſhall ſweetly cloſe with, and embrace each other, *Ezek.* 37.16, to the 21. there *Ephraim* and *Jacob* are made one ſtick; and then in ver. 21. forward, you read of God's reſolution to deliver them out of captivity. But of this I ſhall ſay but little, but pray the more, That the good *Lord* would grant for his mercy ſake, that his people would think on it, and labour for healing-principles, that the Work of *Zions* deliverance might not at laſt ſtick here, and ſo for want of a Spirit of love and condeſcention one to another, we keep our ſelves ſtil apart one from another, and our great mercy by this means apart from our ſelves and our children.

The *Lord* help us, and pity a rended, torn people, that have yet little profited by our afflictions; and make thoſe one on earth that muſt be one in Heaven, for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake our Lord, *Amen.*

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